

R E M A R K S

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1 and 3-9 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejections in view of the amendments and remarks as set forth below.

Entry of Amendment

Applicants submit that the present amendment should be entered since it places the application ***prima facie*** in condition for allowance. In particular, applicants have cancelled claims 10 to 19, 21 and 22 which have been rejected. The Examiner has indicated that claims 1 and 3 through 9 would be allowable if submitted in a separate timely filed amendment cancelling the non-allowable claims. Accordingly, applicants submit that all of the claims are now allowable. Accordingly, entry of the amendment and full consideration thereof are considered proper.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2 and 4-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Nakashima et al. (U.S. Patent 6,141,123) in view of Shirochi (U.S. Patent 6,075,581) and Tedesco et al. (U.S. Patent 5,471,327). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants have amended claim 1 in the same manner presented in the non-entered Amendment of February 16, 2005. In answer to that non-entered Amendment, the Examiner indicated in the Advisory Action of March 2, 2005, that this amendment to claim 1 would overcome the rejection. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1 as well as dependent claims 3 through 9 are allowable over this rejection.

Claims 10-14, 17-19, 21 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Shirochi in view of Tedesco et al. and Nakashima et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed. These claims have been cancelled, rendering this rejection moot.

Claims 15 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Shirochi in view of Tedesco et al., Nakashima et al. and Abileah et al. (U.S. Patent 5,629,784). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Since these claims have also been cancelled, this rejection is also rendered moot.

Continuation Application

Applicants reserve the right to continue prosecution of the cancelled claims in a continuation application.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the patents relied on by the Examiner, either alone or in combination. In view of this, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert F. Gnuse (Reg. No. 27,295) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition for a two months extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application. The required fee of \$330.00 is attached hereto, the fee for the first month's extension in the amount of \$120.00 having been paid with the Amendment of February 16, 2005.

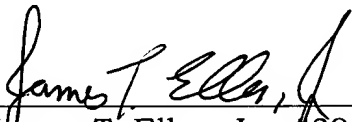
If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No.

Appl. No.09/667,006
Atty. Docket No. 2658-0222P

02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17;
particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
James T. Eller, Jr., #39,538

JTE:RFG/mks
2658-0222P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000